

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method for enabling a three-dimensional simulation through a region, comprising:
 - obtaining information about a path traversed by a user through a region, including a plurality of locations on said path;
 - acquiring content associated with at least some of said locations;
 - correlating said locations with said content; and
 - enabling an interactive three-dimensional simulation through said region as experienced from a moving vantage point along a simulation route, including:
 - accessing a three-dimensional map for at least a portion of said region; and
 - associating said acquired content to locations on said three-dimensional map based on said correlation.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1 where said simulation route is different than said traversed path.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1 where said simulation route is at least partially user-specifiable.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1 where said simulation route is at least partially automatically generated.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1 where:
 - (i) at least some of said locations are known as a function of time;
 - (ii) at least some of said content is identifiable by its time of acquisition; and
 - (iii) said associating includes using said times in (i) and (ii) to determine locations on said map where said content should be associated.
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6. The method of claim 1 where said content represents synthetic content.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising organizing said content in an electronic file by classifications thereof.

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8. The method of claim 1 where said obtaining information about said path includes capturing orientation information along said traversed path.

9. A method for simulating a trip through a region, from a three-dimensional
10 vantage point, comprising:

- accessing information about a path traversed through a region, including a plurality of predetermined locations;
- accessing content associated with at least some of said locations;
- accessing a three-dimensional map of said region;
- associating at least some of said content, and at least some of said locations, with said map;
- determining a simulation route through said region; and
- displaying to a user an interactive simulation along said simulation route, including presenting content along said simulation route, as experienced from
20 a moving vantage point.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising presenting at least some of said content at least partially off of said path.

25 11. The method of claim 10 further comprising displaying at least some of said content as a rotating image.

12. The method of claim 10 further comprising suspending presentation of said off-path content based on its proximity and field-of-view relative to said user.

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13. The method of claim 9 where:

- (i) said simulation route substantially tracks said traversed path; and
- (ii) said moving vantage point follows said traversed path.

14. The method of claim 9 including modifying at least a portion of said
5 simulation route to avoid collision with at least some of said content during said
simulation.

15. The method of claim 9 including specifying at least a portion of said
simulation route in accordance with local terrain features.

10 16. The method of claim 9 further comprising presenting more detailed
information about at least one item of content selected by said user.

15 17. The method of claim 9 further comprising defining said moving vantage point
by said user's selection of at least one item of content.

18. The method of claim 9 further comprising pausing, while presenting at least
some of said content, to improve user access thereto.

20 19. The method of claim 9 further comprising executing at least one automated
process for performing a user-specified interactive simulation aspect that would
otherwise be inconvenient for the user to implement manually.

25 20. The method of claim 19 further comprising accepting a user command to
override a portion of the automated process.

21. The method of claim 19 where said automated process includes automatically
generating a simulation route related to, but not identical to, said traversed path.

30 22. The method of claim 9 where obtaining said simulation route includes:
(i) accepting a user-specified sequence of locations to be visited; and

(ii) calculating said simulation route by curve-fitting said specified sequence of locations.

23. The method of claim 9 further comprising accessing information about
5 multiple paths for use in said simulation.

24. The method of claim 9 further comprising displaying simulation information
to multiple users.

10 25. The method of claim 22 further comprising facilitating said multiple users to
interact with each other during said simulation.

26. A computer-readable medium, for enabling a three-dimensional simulation
through a region, comprising logic instructions that when executed:

15 • obtain information about a path traversed by a user through a region, including
a plurality of locations on said path;
• acquire content associated with at least some of said locations;
• correlate said locations with said content; and
• enable an interactive three-dimensional simulation of travel through said
20 region as experienced from a moving vantage point along a simulation route,
including:
• access a three-dimensional map for at least a portion of said region; and
• associate said acquired content to locations on said three-dimensional map
based on said correlation.

25 27. The computer-readable medium of claim 26 where said simulation route is
different than said traversed path.

30 28. The computer-readable medium of claim 26 where said simulation route is at
least partially user-specified.

29. The computer-readable medium of claim 26 where said simulation route is at least partially automatically generated.
30. The computer-readable medium of claim 26 where said content represents synthetic content.
31. A computer-readable medium for simulating a trip through a region, from a three-dimensional vantage point, comprising logic instructions that when executed:
 - 10 • access information about a path traversed through a region, including a plurality of predetermined locations;
 - access content associated with at least some of said locations;
 - access a three-dimensional map of said region;
 - associate at least some of said content, and at least some of said locations, on said map;
 - 15 • determine a simulation route through said region; and
 - display to a user an interactive simulation along said simulation route, including presenting content along said simulation route, as experienced from a moving vantage point.
- 20 32. The computer-readable medium of claim 31 including modifying at least a portion of said simulation route to avoid collision with at least some of said content during said simulation.
- 25 33. The computer-readable medium of claim 31 further comprising executing at least one automated process, for performing a user-specified interactive simulation aspect that would otherwise be inconvenient for the user to implement manually.
34. The computer-readable medium of claim 31 further comprising facilitating multiple users' interaction with each other during said simulation.

35. Apparatus for enabling a three-dimensional simulation through a region, comprising:

- means for obtaining information about a path traversed by a user through a region, including a plurality of locations on said path;
- 5 • means for acquiring content associated with at least some of said locations;
- means for correlating said locations with said content; and
- means for enabling an interactive three-dimensional simulation through said region as experienced from a moving vantage point along a simulation route, including:
 - 10 • means for accessing a three-dimensional map for at least a portion of said region; and
 - means for associating said acquired content to locations on said three-dimensional map based on said correlation.

15 36. Apparatus for simulating a trip through a region, from a three-dimensional vantage point, comprising:

- means for accessing information about a path traversed through a region, including a plurality of predetermined locations;
- means for accessing content associated with at least some of said locations;
- 20 • means for accessing a three-dimensional map of said region;
- means for associating at least some of said content, and at least some of said locations, with said map;
- means for determining a simulation route through said region; and
- means for displaying to a user an interactive simulation along said simulation route, including presenting content along said simulation route, as experienced 25 from a moving vantage point.